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Recreation Report

Lover's Canyon

**Salmon/Scott River Ranger District, Klamath National Forest
Siskiyou County, California**

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Recreation Report

Introduction

This report analyzes the Lover's Canyon Project proposed action and alternatives with respect to the recreation resources for the Scott River Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest. It includes descriptions of the recreation resources within the project area and analysis of the potential effects to these resources for each of the Alternatives. Recreation analysis is largely guided by the Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines (Forest Plan, USDA 1995, as amended) as well as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) and Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) of the Forest.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum places Forest lands on a spectrum of classes, and uses "setting indicators" as proxies for the recreation experience that is to be provided through setting and management actions. When proposed actions are analyzed through the indicators, we can determine how compatible they are with the ROS class or classes that exist within the project area. The entirety of this project is within the *Roaded Natural* ROS Class, and we will pay close attention to the *Visitor Management* indicator as we analyze the proposed action and alternatives. The *Naturalness* indicator tiers back to the Visual Quality Objectives, which are also being analyzed in the Scenery Report, and the other five indicators, *Visitor Impacts*, *Access*, *Remoteness*, *Facilities and Site Management* and *Social Encounters*, are very unlikely to be affected by this type of project.

Forest Plan Standard and Guide 12-26: "ROS classes identified for management areas emphasize general direction for recreation management. Specific ROS criteria and conditions are subject to adjustment in order to achieve desired conditions."

Additional Forest Plan standards and guides that inform planning are:

12-7 Manage existing and future developed sites to prevent degradation of the surrounding areas. Programmed timber harvest shall not be scheduled from developed recreation sites, but opportunities to manage the vegetation to improve safety and aesthetics should be taken.

12-9 Perform site maintenance and hazard reduction activities at dispersed use sites to provide for basic user satisfaction and safety. Where trees are to be cut for the construction or maintenance of authorized structures, fell them well away from trails or campsites to maintain public safety.

Methodology

Analysis Indicators

The *Visitor Management* indicator will be used to analyze the potential impacts to visitors caused by disruptions such as road closures, site closures, traffic controls, log hauling, decking, staging, burning, etc. We will examine their likelihood and duration by estimating the number of high use days (weekends, holidays, hunting season) impacted (Table 1) and the magnitude of any impacts by quantifying potential disruptions as in Table 2. *Visitor Management* is used as a proxy for impacts to Public Recreation Access. The assumption is made that all project activities would take place within one year, with the possible exception of prescribed burning.

VISITOR MANAGEMENT						
	LOW REGIMENTATION NO ONE SITE CONTROLS OR INFORMATION FACILITIES	SUBTLE ON SITE REGIMENTATION AND CONTROLS VERY LIMITED INFORMATION FACILITIES	ON-SITE REGIME- NTATION AND CONTROLS ARE NOTICABLE BUT HARMONIZE WITH THE NATURAL EN- VIRONMENT SIMPLE INFORMA- TION FACILITIES	REGIMENTATION AND CONTROLS OBVIOUS AND NUMEROUS BUT HARMONIZE MORE COMPLEX INFORMATION FACILITIES	REGIMENTATION AND CONTROLS OBVIOUS AND NUMEROUS SOPHISTICATED INFORMATION EXHIBITS	
PRIMITIVE	NORM	INCON	UNACCEPTABLE			
SEMI-PRIMITIVE NON-MOTORIZED	FULLY COMPATIBLE	NORM	INCON	UNACCEPTABLE		
SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED		NORM	INCON	UNACCEPTABLE		
ROADED NATURAL		NORM		INCON	UNACCEPTABLE	
RURAL		NORM			INCON	UNACCEPTABLE
URBAN		NORM			NORM	NORM

ROS Visitor Management Matrix

Measures

Measures of the *Visitor Management* indicator are below, including levels of impact to visitors and the level of disruption per impact, occurring on high use days (weekends, holidays and during hunting season)

Table 1. Number of high use days impacted (likelihood and duration).

Number of Days	Level of Impact
0	None
1-3	Low
4-9	Moderate
10+	High

Table 2. Magnitude of disruptions to visitors.

Description	Level of Disruption
Project Activities apparent but not disruptive to use	None
Project Activities apparent, traffic delays of up to 45 minutes at a time, and additional project related traffic on roadways, turnouts or other flat	Low

areas occasionally used for log decking or staging equipment	
Traffic stopped throughout the day, or road closed for a short period of time (more than 45 minutes per closure). Multiple potential dispersed sites or scenic viewpoints utilized for decking or staging.	Moderate
Road or roads temporarily closed for multiple days without reasonable access provided by detour or traffic control (allowing cars to pass)	High

For instance, if traffic is held on a road that accesses a trailhead for up to 30 minutes over the course of 3 weekend or holiday days, that would be a low magnitude and low duration of disruption. Traffic held for an hour during 10 such days would be considered a moderate magnitude and high level of disruption. The table below illustrates levels of acceptability for various combinations of impact.

Table 3. Matrix of magnitude and duration to determine acceptability of proposed action and alternatives

Duration: None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Duration: Low	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Duration: Moderate	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Duration: High	N/A	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
	Magnitude: None	Magnitude: Low	Magnitude: Moderate	Magnitude: High

Spatial and Temporal Bounding of Analysis Area

The analysis will include Recreation sites (trails, trailheads, campgrounds and primary roads) adjacent to the project area, or that may otherwise be impacted by the project (equipment access, road closure, etc.) and will look at potential effects for the duration of project activities. The *Visitor Management* indicator is unlikely to be affected by the project after activities are complete. In other words, direct effects are those that occur during and as a result of the project, and indirect effects are those that occur after completion of project activities.

Affected Environment

The Lover's Canyon area is one of the most highly used recreation areas on the Forest, including the highest use trailhead (Canyon Creek), additional wilderness access trailheads (Paradise, Box Camp and Boulder Creek) and Indian Scotty Campground and Group Site.

The area is utilized by various Permitted Outfitters and Guides who provide pack trips or group outings from Lover's Camp and Paradise Trailheads. One such outfitter manages a small permitted pack station located on the 43N45 road approximately ½ mile below Lover's Camp.

Currently, *Visitor Management* would be described as “Subtle on-site regimentation and controls; Very limited information facilities” (Table 1). Traffic controls are minimal and rely on observance of state laws and norms, parking areas have designated parking spots, and informational signs exist to inform visitors of campground regulations, trail and wilderness regulations, fire related danger and regulations, and to provide maps and other information. Trailhead access is free and unencumbered. Outfitters and Guides provide projected use itineraries each season, though there is an expectation that schedules will fluctuate based on unforeseeable changes, including but not limited to wildfires, and economics and the market for guided trips.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 1 – No Action

Direct Effects and Indirect Effects

If there is no action, there will be no disruptions to recreation opportunities of the *Visitor Management* indicator, and therefore no effects to the recreation resource.

Cumulative Effects

If there are no effects to the recreation resource, there will be no cumulative effects to the recreation resource.

Effects Common to Alternatives 2 and 3

For recreation resources, the effects of alternatives 2 and 3 have no measurable difference, and will be analyzed together. Both alternatives would treat within the same footprint on the ground but with prescriptions that would result in different intensities of treatment within the units. The effects to the measures for the *Visitor Management* indicator would be unchanged between these two alternatives.

Direct and Indirect Effects

If the proposed action is implemented, it would be done in accordance with the recreation and scenery project design features (PDF-R1 – R6; PDF S1 – S5, chapter 2 of the Lover’s Canyon EA). Most notably, PDF-R3 requires there to be no hauling of logs (ie. log trucks on the road) on the paved Lover’s Camp road (44N45 and 43N45) during high use days. Therefore, there should be only minor impacts to public recreation access due to log hauling, and they would occur during low use days of the week.

Logging of units 97, 110 and 111 may require temporary closures to a portion of the paved Lover’s Camp road for public safety, traffic controllers would be in place, and an alternative route to Lover’s Camp will be provided and signed accordingly. This would present a low magnitude of disruption due to the minimal wait times at traffic controls, and a low to moderate duration of disruption, adding up to an acceptable overall level of disruption to public recreation access, primarily due to the provision of an alternative route.

Impacts to Outfitter and Guide services will be mitigated because Timber Sale Administrators would coordinate with Recreation Staff, who will in turn coordinate with Outfitters and Guides to eliminate potential conflicts through scheduling.

Cumulative Effects

Effects to visitor management and recreation access will be minimal and are mitigated through project design features and coordination between staff, permittees and contractors. Activities occurring within the same spatial and temporal timeframe will not have additional adverse effects to visitor management and recreation access, and therefore these effects are not cumulative.

Summary of Effects

Table 4. Summary of effects to the visitor management indicator

Indicator	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Visitor Management	No effect	Acceptable level of impact with implementation of project design features

Compliance with law, regulation, policy, and the Forest Plan

Forest Plan standard and guidelines are met through implementation of the proposed action, and additional measures are proposed to minimize impacts to public recreation access.

Literature Cited

USDA Forest Service. 1995 (updated through 2010). Land and Resource Management Plan:
Klamath National Forest. Yreka, CA.

